

## CLAIMS

1. A mutant strain of *L. bulgaricus* lacking  
5  $\beta$ -galactosidase activity, characterized in that it  
carries a non-sense mutation in at least one of the  
coding sequences of the lactose operon.

2. The mutant strain of *L. bulgaricus* as claimed  
in claim 1, characterized in that said coding sequence  
10 is the sequence encoding  $\beta$ -galactosidase.

3. The mutant strain of *L. bulgaricus* as claimed  
in either of claims 1 and 2, deposited on January 14,  
1998 with the CNCM under the number I-1968.

4. A lactic ferment, characterized in that it  
15 comprises at least one strain of *L. bulgaricus* as  
claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3.

5. The lactic ferment as claimed in claim 4,  
characterized in that said strain of *L. bulgaricus* is  
combined with at least one strain of *S. thermophilus*.

6. A method for preparing a fermented dairy  
product, characterized in that it comprises a step  
during which milk is fermented using a lactic ferment  
comprising at least one strain of *L. bulgaricus* as  
20 claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, in the presence of  
at least one sugar which can be assimilated by said  
strain.

7. The method as claimed in claim 6, characterized  
in that said sugar which can be assimilated is glucose.

8. The method as claimed in either of claims 6  
25 and 7, characterized in that the arrest of fermentation  
is carried out without cooling of said dairy product.

9. A fermented dairy product which can be obtained  
using a method as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 8.

10. The fermented dairy as claimed in claim 9,  
35 characterized in that said product is a yogurt.

Add A1 or a  
Separate part

Add  
B3